

Message Text

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14

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-09 H-02 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-12

TRSE-00 SAJ-01 GAC-01 RSR-01 /095 W
----- 022570

R 100700 Z MAY 73

FM AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1266

INFO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

USNATO 1820

USEC BRUSSELS

C O N F I D E N T I A L THE HAGUE 2138

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, NL

SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR'S FAREWELL CALL ON MAY 7 ON FOREIGN MINISTER
SCHMELZER

1. IN OUR FAREWELL CONVERSATION FOREIGN MINISTER SCHMELZER SPOKE
FRANKLY AND WITHOUT BITTERNESS ABOUT THE PEOPLE WHO ARE SCHEDULED
TO
SUCCEED HIM AND HIS ASSOCIATE IN THE BIESHEUVEL GOVERNMENT LATER
THIS

WEEK. HE SAID THAT THE NEW PRIME MINISTER, JOOP DEN UYL, AND HIS
FOREIGN MINISTER AND DEFENSE MINISTER (VAN DER STOEL AND VREDLING
RESPECTIVELY) WERE ALL REASONABLE MEN. SCHMELZER DID NOT THINK
THAT

WE WOULD HAVE ANY SERIOUS PROBLEMS WITH THEM ON DEFENSE ALTHOUGH
HE EXPECTED THAT THE MORE LEFT- WING MEMBERS OF THE GOVERNMENT AND
THEIR SUPPORTERS IN PARLIAMENT WOULD KEEP THE PRESSURE ON TO QUOTE
RATIONALIZE UNQUOTE THE DUTCH DEFENSE EFFORT. MOREOVER THE ONE
WOMAN MEMBER OF THE NEW CABINET, MRS. IRENE VORRINK (LABOR
PARTY - AMSTERDAM) WAS ALREADY AGITATING FOR A QUOTE PHYSICAL CUT
UNQUOTE IN THE CURRENT DEFENSE BUDGET, NOT JUST RATIONALIZATION.
AS MINISTER FOR PUBLIC HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT MRS. VORRINK WILL HAVE
NO OFFICIAL COMPETENCE FOR DEFENSE MATTERS, WHICH PERHAPS EXPLAINS
WHY SCHMELZER DID NOT EXPECT SHE WOULD HAVE GREAT INFLUENCE IN
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THIS FIELD.

2. THE FOREIGN MINISTER THOUGHT THAT THE DEN UYL GOVERNMENT WOULD LAST AT LEAST A YEAR, ADDING THAT ITS OPPONENTS SHOULD IN ANY CASE GIVE IT THAT LONG TO SEE HOW IT HANDLES ITS JOB.

3. IN A TELEPHONE CALL TO ME ON THE SAME DAY FORMER STATE SECRETARY THEO WESTERTERP, WHO WILL BE MINISTER OF TRANSPORT AND WATERWAYS IN THE NEW GOVERNMENT, EXPRESSED COMPARABLE CONFIDENCE THAT THERE WOULD BE NO SUBSTANTIAL REDUCTIONS IN THIS YEAR'S DEFENSE BUDGET. HOWEVER, HE THOUGHT THERE WOULD BE REAL PRESSURES TO CUT INTO THE 1974 DEFENSE BUDGET. I REMINDED HIM THAT WASHINGTON WATCHED DEVELOPMENTS IN THE NETHERLANDS VERY CLOSELY AND WOULD BE PARTICULARLY CONCERNED BY ANY BUDGET CUTTING THAT HAD IMPLICATIONS FOR DUTCH PERFORMANCE OF THEIR NATO RESPONSIBILITIES.

4. SCHMELZER'S TOLERANT, QUOTE LET'S GIVE THEM A CHANCE UNQUOTE ATTITUDE TOWARD THE DEN UYL GOVERNMENT IS COMPLETELY IN CHARACTER FOR HIM AND ALSO REFLECTS HIS WILLINGNESS TO DETACH HIMSELF FROM THE POLITICAL SCENE AT THIS TIME. IT CONTRASTS WITH THE ANTAGONISTIC ATTITUDE OF PRIME MINISTER BIESHEUVEL (THE HAGUE 2082), WHO IS SOMEWHAT BITTER ABOUT THE WAY THE SITUATION HAS WORKED OUT, DOES NOT PARTICULARLY WISH THE NEW GOVERNMENT WELL, DOES NOT GIVE IT A VERY LONG LIFE, AND MAY IN FACT RETURN TO THE SECOND CHAMBER TO LEAD IN THE FIGHT AGAINST IT. ONE OF THESE TWO VERY GOOD FRIENDS OF THE UNITED STATES WILL PRESUMABLY BE PROVED WRONG BY COMING EVENTS. IT MAY WELL PROVE TO BE THE PRIME MINISTER. MIDDENDORF

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